

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SIG-03 PM-05 H-02 INR-10  
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 069286

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, PAN

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S AND SECRETARY'S STATE-  
MENTS ON SENATE  
ADOPTION OF PANAMA CANAL NEUTRALITY TREATY.

1. THERE FOLLOW TEXTS OF SUBJECT STATEMENTS MADE AFTER  
SENATE VOTE ON MARCH 16.

A. PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT: BEGIN QUOTE: I HAVE A BRIEF  
STATEMENT TO MAKE.

THE PEOPLE OF OUR NATION OWE A DEBT OF THANKS TO THE  
MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE FOR THEIR COURAGEOUS  
ACTION TAKEN TODAY IN VOTING FOR THE PANAMA CANAL  
NEUTRALITY TREATY.

I ADD MY SINCERE PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ENTIRE  
SENATE AND ESPECIALLY TO THE THREE MEN WHO HAVE LED THEIR  
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COLLEAGUES WITH BIPARTISAN STATESMANSHIP AND WISDOM  
THROUGH THIS LONG DEBATE -- SENATOR ROBERT BYRD, THE  
MAJORITY LEADER; SENATOR HOWARD BAKER, THE MINORITY  
LEADER; AND SENATOR JOHN SPARKMAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE  
FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE.

AS A NATION, WE ALSO OWE OUR GRATITUDE AND ADMIRATION TO

FORMER PRESIDENT FORD AND TO DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN LEADERS WHO HAVE SERVED IN PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS WHO, BY GIVING THE TREATIES THEIR SUPPORT, GAVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO JUDGE THE TREATIES ON THEIR MERITS AND NOT ON A PARTISAN POLITICAL BASIS.

THIS VOTE TODAY IS, OF COURSE, ONLY THE FIRST STEP IN THE PROCESS OF RATIFICATION, BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE SENATE WILL SHOW THE SAME COURAGE AND FORESIGHT WHEN IT CONSIDERS THE SECOND TREATY. THIS IS A PROMISING STEP TOWARD A NEW ERA IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH PANAMA AND WITH ALL OF LATIN AMERICA.

GENERAL TORRIJOS AND THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN PATIENT AND FOREBEARING DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND DURING THE SENATE DEBATE. THEY HAVE EARNED THE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THEIR ACTIONS DURING THE LAST FEW MONTHS IS PROOF OF THEIR WILLINGNESS TO FORM A PARTNERSHIP WITH US, TO JOIN IN COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION.

IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN 14 YEARS SINCE NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN WITH PANAMA, AND WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH MANY MONTHS OF DISCUSSION AND DEBATE ABOUT THE TWO TREATIES THAT THE SENATE HAS CONSIDERED. THIS HAS BEEN A LONG DEBATE, BUT ALL OF US HAVE LEARNED FROM IT.

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THE BASIC PURPOSE AND THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES OF THE TREATY HAVE BEEN AFFIRMED AND STRENGTHENED BY THE ACTIONS OF THE SENATE. UNDER THE TREATIES AS APPROVED, THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA WILL HAVE JOINT RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE THAT THE CANAL AFTER THE YEAR 2000 WILL REMAIN NEUTRAL AND SECURE, OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE.

THE UNITED STATES CAN TAKE WHATEVER ACTIONS ARE NECESSARY TO MAKE SURE THE CANAL REMAINS OPEN AND SAFE. THE VESSELS OF WAR AND AUXILIARY VESSELS OF THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA ARE ASSURED OF TRANSIT THROUGH THE CANAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND CAN GO TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE IN TIME OF EMERGENCY OR NEED.

WHILE THE RIGHT OF THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA TO ACT AGAINST ANY THREAT TO THE REGIME OF NEUTRALITY IS ASSURED BY THIS TREATY, IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THERE IS A RIGHT OF INTERVENTION, NOR DO WE WANT A RIGHT OF INTERVENTION BY THE UNITED STATES IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF PANAMA.

BUT PERHAPS THE MOST ENCOURAGING LESSON OF ALL IN THESE

LAST LONG MONTHS IS THAT IN A FULL AND OPEN DEBATE, EVEN IN A VERY CONTROVERSIAL AND DIFFICULT ISSUE, IN OUR FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES WE CAN STILL REACH THE DECISIONS THAT ARE IN OUR NATION'S LONG-TERM BEST INTERESTS.

I CONGRATULATE AGAIN THE SENATORS FOR THEIR DECISIONS AND GIVE THEM, ON BEHALF OF THE NATION, MY SINCERE THANKS.  
END QUOTE.

B. SECRETARY'S STATEMENT: BEGIN QUOTE: I AM VERY GRATIFIED AT THE OUTCOME OF THIS FIRST CRUCIAL VOTE ON THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES. PASSAGE THIS AFTERNOON OF THE NEUTRALITY TREATY AFTER CAREFUL AND DELIBERATE CON-  
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SIDERATION BY THE UNITED STATES SENATE IS IN THIS COUNTRY'S HIGHEST NATIONAL INTEREST. WHILE THERE IS MORE WORK TO DO AND ANOTHER TREATY TO CONSIDER, THE ADMINISTRATION CONGRATULATES THE SENATE AND PARTICULARLY MAJORITY LEADER ROBERT BYRD, MINORITY LEADER HOWARD BAKER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE JOHN SPARKMAN ON THIS MAJOR STEP FORWARD. WE KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF PANAMA AND OTHER NATIONS AROUND THE WORLD WILL WELCOME THIS OUTCOME. END QUOTE.

2. SEPTELS WILL FOLLOW WITH TEXT OF KEY AMENDMENTS AND RESERVATIONS ADOPTED BY SENATE AS WELL AS FURTHER COMMENT AND GUIDANCE FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS.

3. ACTION REQUESTED. PLEASE DELIVER TEXT OF TWO STATEMENTS TO CHIEF OF STATE/HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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